

# FACT SHEET



## Bruno Co-op Site Bruno, Nebraska

**March 1999**

### UPDATE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is working on implementing the Record of Decision (ROD) signed on September 30, 1998, for the Bruno Co-op Superfund site, in Bruno, Nebraska. The ROD, which explains how existing groundwater contamination caused by the chemicals carbon tetrachloride, chloroform, and 1,2-dichloroethane at the Bruno Co-op site will be addressed, calls for:

- Pumping and treating contaminated groundwater to restore the groundwater for future use;
- Monitoring the groundwater contamination and periodically reviewing the results from the monitoring to determine the effectiveness of the pump and treat system;
- Treating the contaminated groundwater that is pumped out of the ground by air stripping using tray aeration;
- Discharging the treated groundwater to a nearby tributary of Skull Creek.  
(Alternatively, state and local authorities may be able to beneficially reuse the water.)
- Abandoning Bruno Supply Well #36-1 and possibly returning Bruno Supply Well #65-1 to use during times when the demand for water is high.

### NEXT STEPS

Under the federal Superfund law (formally known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act) and its regulations, EPA is expected to try to conserve the taxpayer-supported Superfund. EPA contacts potentially responsible parties (PRPs) who may be liable for the cleanup under the law to determine whether they are willing and able to carry out the cleanup themselves and/or to help pay for the cost of the cleanup.

As part of this process, Superfund "notice letters" are typically issued to PRPs to inform them of their potential liability to the Superfund and to initiate negotiations. PRPs at Superfund sites include, under the Superfund law: 1) the present owners and operators at the site; 2) past owners

and operators at the time hazardous substances were disposed of; and 3) parties who generated hazardous substances and arranged to dispose of them at a site.

On February 11, 1999, EPA sent notice letters to three parties who are potentially liable under the Superfund law for cleanup of the Bruno Co-op site: U.S. Department of Agriculture, which operated grain storage at the site from 1949 to 1964; the Union Pacific Railroad Company, a successor of the Chicago and North Western Railroad Company, which owned the property until 1964; and the Bruno Co-op, the current owner of the property.

At a later date, the PRPs will be invited to enter into negotiations with EPA. Negotiations may result in PRPs agreeing to carry out the remedy and to divide up the costs, with the PRPs also reimbursing the Superfund for any past or future costs incurred by the taxpayers.

While the law allows each party to be held liable for the total cost of cleanup, EPA tries to encourage fairness in such negotiations. EPA policy specifically allows the Agency to consider a PRP's claim of inability to pay. In the event that any PRP raises such a claim, EPA will evaluate whether shouldering a specific amount of cleanup costs would inflict undue financial hardship on a PRP and endanger the survival of its business.

If negotiations are successful, EPA and the PRPs sign a legal agreement specifying the responsibilities of each of the parties. Following that, the actual work called for in the ROD to address the groundwater contamination at the site can begin.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The ROD and a number of other site-related documents can be found in the site's public document repository, which is available for review at the following locations, during normal business hours:

Bruno Post Office  
Bruno, Nebraska

U.S. EPA Region 7  
726 Minnesota Avenue  
Kansas City, Kansas

If you have questions or need additional information about this site, please contact:

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